



State of Wisconsin

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS  
Wisconsin Emergency Management

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**INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE MEMO**  
**05-01-03**

**DATE:** May 16, 2003

**TO:** County Emergency Management Directors

**FROM:** Edward J. Gleason  
Administrator

**SUBJECT:** 2003 HEAT AWARENESS DAY

Governor Jim Doyle has proclaimed June 19, 2003 as Wisconsin's Heat Awareness Day. The National Weather Service, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services and Wisconsin Emergency Management are co-sponsoring Heat Awareness Day to alert the public of the hazards associated with extended periods of extreme heat and the precautions needed to protect oneself when this condition exists.

Since 1982, heat waves have been responsible for more deaths in the state than all other natural disasters combined. While extreme heat concerns are covered briefly during Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week in the spring, extreme heat conditions are often overshadowed by the drama and raw destructive powers of storm systems. In June and July of 1995, two severe heat waves resulted in 150 heat-related deaths and over 300 heat-related illnesses. Last year, five people died in Wisconsin due to heat-related causes.

The enclosed information is similar to that being sent to health professionals throughout the state and additional information on Heat Awareness Day will be sent to the media as the date draws nearer. Included is a list of medications that affect a person's ability to tolerate excessive heat. It is important that those people most susceptible to heat related problems, such as the elderly, young, low-income, and people on medication, are properly warned and assisted when periods of extreme heat are identified. The intent is to have the state populations aware of the possible risks and precautions that should be taken in the event of a severe heat wave in the state.

If you have any questions concerning extreme heat issues or Heat Awareness Day, please contact your Regional Emergency Management Director.

Enclosures

**DISTRIBUTION:**  
MG Albert H. Wilkening, TAG  
Stan Davis, Governor's Legal Counsel  
Tom Andersen, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services  
National Weather Service (5) District Offices  
Wisconsin Emergency Management Staff

**\*\* Previous Information & Guidance Memo 04-02-03, 2003 NOAA Weather Radio Awareness Day**